



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

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Transportation Planning Division

**MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 19, 2012 HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR WORK
GROUP MEETING**

To: High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group
From: Jim Maslanka, City of Alexandria, T&ES; Steve Sindiong, City of Alexandria, T&ES
Meeting Date: January 19, 2012
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Meeting Location: Patrick Henry Elementary School, Auditorium
Subject: Transitway Corridor Feasibility Study High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group Meeting #12
Attendees: **Corridor Work Group:** Councilman Rob Krupicka (Co-Chair), Councilman Paul Smedberg (Co-Chair), Anna Bentley, Donna Fossum, Dak Hardwick, Poul Hertel, John Komoroske, Nancy Jennings
City of Alexandria staff: Jim Maslanka (T&ES), Steve Sindiong (T&ES), Karen Callahan (T&ES), Sandra Marks (T&ES), Zunilda Rodriguez (P&Z), Pat Mann (P&Z)
Consultants: David Whyte (Kimley-Horn), Erin Murphy (Kimley-Horn), Amy Archer (RK&K)
Council Present: Councilmember Del Pepper
Members of the Public: 49 citizens signed in

Agenda

1. Introduction
 - a. Opening Remarks
 - b. Meeting Objectives and Goals
 - i. Recap of Corridor B Alternatives
 - ii. Review of Secondary Screening of Corridor B (Duke Street) Alternatives
2. General Updates
 - a. Distribution of December 15, 2011 meeting minutes
3. Corridor B Secondary Screening
 - a. Brief Recap of Existing Conditions
 - b. Recap of Initial Corridor B Alternatives
 - c. Corridor B Alternatives selected for Secondary Screening
 - d. Secondary Screening Criteria
 - e. Summary of Results of Secondary Screening of Alternatives

4. General CWG & Public Comment

5. Logistics and Next Steps

- a. Next meeting date
- b. Next meeting topic

Summary of Discussion

Introduction

- Goal of the meeting:
 - Steve Sindiong, T&ES, noted that the goal of the meeting will be to review and receive input on the secondary screening of narrowed alternatives for Corridor B, and receive direction on alternatives to move forward with. The last meeting presented six alternatives. Since then, the project team has narrowed down the alternatives to four, based on input, and conducted secondary screening.

December 15, 2011 Minutes (Corridor A)

- Donna Fossum noted that on page 3, her comments should be corrected to note that high capacity transit should not be expedited through “this part of the City”. Minutes, with changes, were unanimously approved.

Corridor B Secondary Screening

- Presentation by David Whyte, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
- High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group (CWG) Comments
 - ***Councilman Paul Smedberg***
 - In terms of destinations, and looking at the timeline, there will be a destination at the Landmark Mall, and the Van Dorn Metrorail station, and King Street Metrorail station.
 - Regarding the direction of dedicated transit lanes, is there one direction that is most important to provide dedicated transit? ***Answer:*** It depends on the time of day. During the morning, the more important direction is eastbound, and in the afternoon, the more important direction is westbound.
 - ***Councilman Rob Krupicka***
 - Important to note that the project is still a few years away. Corridor C is being built first. As redevelopment occurs, we will be better able to negotiate, knowing what is planned for the transitway.
 - ***Anna Bentley***
 - Corridor B has significant constraints. It may have a higher potential for conflict with bicycles due to transit and the parked vehicles.
 - Left hand turns are difficult. There are large portions of the corridor that will continue to be residential, and maintaining left turns will be important.
 - Lean toward Alternative 3 because it has more flexibility to retain service roads while providing dedicated transit lanes.
 - ***Donna Fossum***
 - Consider putting the bike lanes in a safer location.
 - The utilities along Duke Street should be undergrounded with any development.

- Where the service roads are located, there are less travel lanes. Where there are frontage roads, there are more travel lanes.
 - Would like to see a schematic of what is there today.
 - Need to put a right-in/right-out at Taylor Run Parkway at Duke Street.
- ***Dak Hardwick***
 - The emphasis should be on pedestrian safety. This is a primary east-west corridor, and there is a lot of truck and regional traffic, as well as residential development.
 - Don't think the on-street parking would be very efficient, especially with transit using the outside lane.
 - The parking lanes could be turned over to travel lanes during the peak periods – this should be looked at.
 - Regarding funding, why would the Federal government invest in an alternative (Alternative 1) that isn't very efficient? **Answer:** Effectiveness is a key consideration of the Federal Transit Administration, however Alternative 1 still provides some benefit due to the queue jumps and Transit Signal Priority at key intersections.
 - If we can reduce the operating costs in the outlying years, then this reduces the other costs in the City's general fund.
- ***Poul Hertel***
 - When the City did the Transportation Master Plan, we wanted to protect neighborhoods by using existing travel lanes for transit.
 - In the future, we will have the capability to provide personal rapid transit.
 - Transit needs to be complimentary to the neighborhoods – I don't want to negatively impact them.
 - Pedestrian safety is key.
 - Left turns are an issue – I'm not sure we can abandon them.
 - Would like to see Alternative 1 move forward because it protects the neighborhoods.
 - Concerned about Alternative 2 in that it brings parking to the edge. We need to have reasonable setbacks between the buildings and the street.
 - For Alternative 3, would like to see it more clearly described in the cross-section.
 - For Alternative 4, the efficiency is good, but it won't work due to its neighborhood impacts, and should be eliminated.
- ***John Komoroske***
 - Don't understand the difference between Alternative 3 and its variation.
 - Understand the impacts to the service roads.
 - Are there any concerns by the project team for the area between Quaker Lane and King Street? **Answer:** Yes, especially the potential impacts to the existing businesses. That is why the reversible lane alternative has a lesser impact.
 - Like Alternative 3 because it has the best balance. It is important to protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.
- ***Nancy Jennings***
 - Neighborhoods between Quaker Lane and Roth Street would like to see improved traffic flow.
 - Don't know if we will get much benefit from widening where the service roads are located, as the widening may add more traffic.
 - How will the transitway be interfaced with Old Town and Fairfax County?
 - No origin-destination study was done.
 - The City is building athletic fields behind the veterinary hospital, and we will need pedestrian crossings to access the fields.

- **Public Comment** on Corridor B Secondary Screening
 - Why aren't the choke points along Duke Street being addressed today?
 - It will be expensive to acquire real estate – the right-of-way costs described in the presentation are too low.
 - West of the Verizon station to Gordon Street, there are no service roads, what is the impact?
Answer: Primarily noise and vibration impacts.
 - Do the cost estimates take into consideration the potential devaluation of property? **Answer:** Yes.
 - Share concern about the impacts to bikes, but don't see a reason to drop consideration of bike lanes. Other bike facilities don't get people to Quaker Lane. The City has a goal to increase bicycling. From Wheeler Street to the east, there is a need to accommodate bikes.
 - Like the concept of Alternative 3.
 - How do we enforce queue jumps and dedicated lanes?
 - The biggest priority is to get people through Duke Street. Need to deal with Telegraph Road now. The signals at the playfields are terrible.
 - For the six lane segment from Quaker Lane and east, not sure agree with using one lane for transit, especially where the ramps are at Telegraph Road.
 - If you put in an extra lane, there will be an increase in traffic. People will start to use the transit lanes.
 - Why would anyone use transit if it is faster to drive a car?
 - Widening the road near the Alexandria Animal hospital will increase traffic.
 - At the last meeting, two points were not considered – using a low tech solution of bus pullouts rather than a continuous lane. Also need to consider the safety ramifications of the alternatives.
 - None of the alternatives address the real problem – need to connect Quaker Lane to Telegraph Road to reduce congestion on Duke Street.
 - How does the CIP project fit into the alternatives? **Answer:** The CIP projects are in the City's long range forecasted budget, however, they can be adjusted or redefined as other needs change.
 - Regarding curb running vs. median running transitway, it doesn't have to be consistent along the entire corridor. East of Roth Street, the transitway should be median running so it doesn't interfere with the ramps at Telegraph Road. West of Roth Street, it can be curb running.
 - Any discussion of the transit mode? Consider trolley buses.
 - Consider giving up roadway space to accommodate transit and pedestrian safety.
 - Glad the City is looking far out with comprehensive solutions. Different areas of Duke Street have different characteristics. Need to consider the aesthetic impacts, preservation of neighborhoods, and impacts to businesses. Not sure the transit use will be good.
 - Like Alternative 1, but no one size fits all. Different sectors may need a different design. As a bicyclist and pedestrian, need those type of improvements. Need to also improve the landscaping.
 - Property will be impacted with Alternatives 2 and 4. Would be happy with less traffic. Dedicated transit lanes will be used by other traffic.
 - The idea of a connector between Eisenhower Avenue and I-495 has been off the table for awhile.
 - Would like to see a smaller cross-section with less impact to the neighborhoods.
 - The Seminary Hill area is suburban. Not sure who will be using the transit system. Is the transit being used to increase development? If so, it will also bring more traffic.
 - Concerned about the neighborhoods, especially using the service roads and impacts to property values.
 - The transitway will be used by people who live along Duke Street. Concerned about the section between Jordan Street and Quaker Lane. Alternative 3 keeps Duke Street at a human level.
 - The Speedy Lube will be impacted by Alternative 4.
 - Not in favor of anything that brings the traffic closer to homes.
 - If a dedicated transitway is built down the center of Duke Street, you need to consider tort claims of people crossing the street.

- Is development a goal? Some people feel the City is pushing development. **Answer:** No, the goal of the project is to improve mobility options for people throughout the City.

Logistics and Next Steps

- The project team will use the input received to narrow down alternatives for more refined analysis. A recommendation for Corridor B is anticipated in February. Staff will bring a recommendation for Corridors A and B together to the Council in May 2012, after receiving input from the Planning and Transportation Commissions.
- The next meeting for Corridor B will be on Thursday, February 16, 2012 at Patrick Henry Elementary School.